

Cybersecurity
workshop

New TIP
manager

Winter survival
training

Electrical Safety
Month

• CLOSED • Circuit

WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

MAY 2022

**Partnership
and
preparedness**

A low-angle photograph of two utility workers on a tall metal tower against a cloudy sky. One worker is in a bucket at the top, and the other is rappelling down the side. The tower's structure is a series of vertical and horizontal beams.



CLOSED Circuit

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Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| EPTC, INL host hybrid cybersecurity workshop | 1 |
| <i>The Electric Power Training Center hosts its first-ever hybrid event.</i> | |
| New TIP manager shares journey to WAPA | 4 |
| <i>Paul Schwabe became Transmission Infrastructure Program manager in March.</i> | |
| Craft employees practice winter survival skills | 6 |
| <i>In March, employees learned how to keep themselves safe in the field.</i> | |
| Employee feedback shapes strategic plan | 8 |
| <i>WAPA's 2030 strategic plan benefits from valuable perspectives.</i> | |
| Panel discussion spotlights Women of WAPA | 10 |
| <i>Virtual panel events mark Women's History Month.</i> | |
| OEID: under construction! | 13 |
| <i>The Office of Economic Impact and Diversity shares some changes.</i> | |
| Make every month Electrical Safety Month | 14 |
| <i>A recent near-miss event reminds us of the importance of safety.</i> | |
| Rapid Recaps | 16 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIO participates in AI leadership program • WAPA hosts Returning to the Workplace Town Hall • In-person Fall Protection training resumes • DOE CIO tours WAPA | |
| 508 corner | 17 |
| Brief Transmissions | 18 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Complete mandatory trainings • Report harassing conduct • Federal Substance Abuse Testing Program reinstated | |

On the cover

In March, WAPA's annual Fall Protection Train-the-Trainer meeting was held in person for the first time since 2020, with hands-on training taking place at Mead Substation in Nevada. Learn more on Page 16.
(Photo by **Jonathan Pearce**)



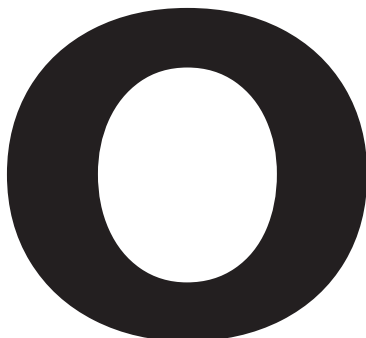


The Electric Power Training Center's first-ever hybrid event was held in partnership with Idaho National Laboratory. It was mainly attended by utility protection engineers and cybersecurity technicians.

EPTC, INL host hybrid cybersecurity workshop

Story by Leah Huff

Photos by Leah Huff and Alex Stephens



On Feb. 23-24, WAPA's Electric Power Training Center hosted its first-ever hybrid event: the 2022 Cybersecurity in Protective Relaying Workshop. This event was run in conjunction with Idaho National Laboratory, with INL representatives attending the event onsite.

continued on Page 2



Electrical Engineer **Joe Liberatore** and Idaho National Laboratory's Steve Bukowski conduct a live demonstration of the Constrained Cyber Communication Device in the Miniature Power System.

The workshop involved many keynote speakers, such as Administrator and CEO **Tracey LeBeau** and Vice President of IT - Cybersecurity **Kevin Schulz**. Speakers from the Department of Energy included Acting Assistant Secretary Patricia A. Hoffman and Senior Advisor for Cybersecurity Cheri Caddy, as well as INL's Steve Bukowski, Jake Gentle and Craig Rieger.

"The workshop brought IT and operational technology professionals into the same room to get familiar with each other's terminology, discuss processes and create understanding of information technology/operational technology interfaces for protection and control systems," said Vice President of Engineering and Design **Dan Hamai**.

Presentations were delivered in a hybrid format, catering to both in-person attendees and those tuning in via WebEx. The event was mainly attended by utility protection engineers

and cybersecurity technicians. Topics focused on cybersecurity as it pertains to the electric utility industry.

"It was important for attendees to learn existing industry issues and perpetuate the ongoing conversation surrounding cybersecurity in the electric utility landscape," said Electrical Engineer **Joe Liberatore**.

"The bottom line was sharing the national labs projects, getting feedback, discussing concerns industry professionals have towards cybersecurity in protective relaying and brainstorming innovative solutions and concepts to improve this environment," added DOE representative David Howard.

Howard said that the workshop, which provided value to the electric utility industry, was still essentially a pilot to determine whether or not innovative solutions could be captured, designed and demonstrated in this format.

"And it worked," he said. "The goal now is to develop a partnership with industry professionals that will improve on the communications between these professionals, researchers and the DOE. In this partnership, accelerated research and solutions will be developed in cybersecurity for protective relaying."

C3D Demo

The workshop included a live-streamed demonstration of the Constrained Cyber Communication Device, or C3D, held in the EPTC's Miniature Power System and led by Liberatore and Bukowski. C3D is a technology that can block cyberattacks from impacting the nation's electric power grid.

"The purpose of the demo was to showcase equipment developed from a 2019 collaborative that can restrict engineering access to protective relays," said Liberatore.



Idaho National Laboratory's Jake Gentle delivers a presentation during the Electric Power Training Center's return to in-person training.

"I feel very good about the C3D demo," Gentle said. "Steve and Joe were excellent, and the multiple cameras helped a lot. I feel this was the best part of the workshop."

"The EPTC provided incredible support throughout the process," added Howard. "The actual demo of C3D was captured professionally and to the level that viewers became engaged."

Hybrid logistics

Due to COVID-19, there were numerous logistics for EPTC to work out while hosting virtual and in-person attendees. Several months of planning between EPTC Manager **Kyle Conroy**, Digital Media Services Manager **Alex Stephens**, Hamai and various members of EPTC and INL staff were required to bring this hybrid event to fruition and ensure that it ran smoothly.

"Providing a hybrid workshop of this nature was new ground for

the EPTC," Conroy said. "As a team, we prepared and tested various alternatives to support this hybrid approach, providing for both in-person and virtual attendees and including breakout sessions. We believe we did a pretty good job ensuring both audio and video communication channels were open to facilitate participation from all."

The event's multicamera setup allowed the production to be recorded for future viewing.

"Thanks to teamwork across programs, we were able to prepare for the event, track registrations and successfully accomplish live video streaming of a demonstration being performed using our Miniature Power System," said Conroy.

Overall, the event was a success.

"The EPTC provides an excellent platform for future hybrid workshops," added Howard. "This was the first return to classroom efforts since COVID-19 began. The staff was agile

and the demonstration video was excellent throughout."

"I was very pleased with the workshop," said Gentle. "As a cohost from INL, we felt very good about the attendance and the hybrid setup. There were some troubles with the audio, but we all worked to make the best of it."

"From this meeting, previous solutions were brought to fruition and new solutions will result from additional situational discoveries," said Liberatore.

"It was a learning experience," Conroy summarizes. "We hope to improve our capabilities to better accommodate this type of hybrid meeting in the future." □

Note: Huff is an administrative analyst who works under the Cherokee Nation Strategic Programs contract.



New TIP manager shares journey to WAPA

In March, WAPA named **Paul Schwabe** as senior vice president and Transmission Infrastructure Program manager. He brings with him a wealth of national lab and utility industry experience. Immediately prior to joining WAPA, he spent 14 years with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.



"My NREL career was largely focused on researching and implementing financial innovations for renewable energy and storage projects," he explained. "I was fortunate to work with stakeholders across all parts of the country, from remote Alaskan communities to Puerto Rican financial institutions and even a few of WAPA's preference power customers."

He has also worked for the investor-owned utility Con Edison in New York City, utility technology company Itron and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

Federal service just might run in his blood.

"My mother was a career federal employee for the U.S. Forest Service," he said. "I appreciated that perspective in my formative years. I lived in Northern California and was there during what was, at the time, the third-most destructive wildfire in state history: the 49er Fire."

Schwabe and his family stayed to help because his mother and stepfather were trained in fire response.

"Growing up in that environment, being around wildfires, including the community we grew up in, makes me really appreciate the work WAPA does in the West," he said.

Crossing paths

During his time with NREL, Schwabe had an opportunity to work with WAPA's TIP team, which was led at the time by current Administrator and CEO **Tracey LeBeau**.

"I conducted a market analysis for the TIP team," he said. "It was a great intro to WAPA, its people and the TIP program specifically. It was clear what a unique federal program TIP is and the strong interest in the program."

He also collaborated with LeBeau when she worked for the DOE Office of Indian Energy.

"We organized a number of renewable energy workshops for Tribes across the U.S. to better understand the unique considerations they faced in terms of financing renewables and transmission access," explained Schwabe. "It was a great opportunity to listen to Tribes and get creative to meet their unique needs rather than coming in with an inflexible approach or communication style. It was a lesson that stuck with me and which I hope to bring to WAPA as well."

Refreshing and growing TIP

In his new role, Schwabe is looking forward to promoting and growing TIP as a program, both internally and externally, and reinforcing its value. He also shared kind words about the work the team had done prior to his arrival.

"The TIP team and a number of key contributors across WAPA have done an amazing job in putting projects through our rigorous process and setting the program up for continued successes," he said. "I am really excited to help the team in offering new ideas, contacts and stakeholder collaboration."

Schwabe said that it is important to enhance rather than interrupt his team's momentum. He also believes that he brings a fresh perspective to the table.

"I want to explore new ways of thinking about TIP projects for myself and the broader TIP team and how we can evolve along with the overall market," he said.

He feels that his broad experience and many industry contacts will serve him well in the role.

"Whether it's private industry, government entities, utilities or Tribes, I am looking forward to working with each of those important stakeholders in the TIP process," he explained. "WAPA does have engagements with NREL and other labs already, but this is another example of the collaboration that I hope to continue to grow."

Outdoors and open doors

In his spare time, Schwabe keeps himself centered by running.

"It's sort of my Zen," he said. "I try not listen to music too much when I run because I enjoy simply zoning out to think about things big and small, and it provides clarity and clears stresses. I've done that for the past 20 plus years and, by my non-scientific estimate, I've run about as many miles as WAPA's transmission lines: 17,000 and growing."

He plans to participate in the classic Colfax Marathon this month and possibly Pikes Peak Marathon this summer. He also enjoys spending time with his wife, Alison, and his children, Trent and Celia.

"We are all going through our first set of ski lessons right now, but we are probably behind the learning curve, Colorado-wise," he said. "Also, my son is a big Colorado Mammoth fan, so I'm trying to get into lacrosse a bit. He's teaching me most of the rules so far."

Schwabe looks forward to meeting and getting to know his colleagues throughout WAPA, and he emphasized the fact that he wants to hear from them.

"I want to always be open to the many perspectives and experience with TIP and more," he said. "If you have an idea for a project or direction, my virtual office doors are open. I want to be easily accessible to customers outside of the organization, too. TIP at its core is a partnership-based program and that is one of my absolute favorite things about it." □



Lineman *Tyler Delay* practices starting a fire in the snow as part of winter survival training.

Craft employees practice winter survival skills

By Jen Neville

Photos by Daren Boyd

In March, more than 25 linemen and communication technicians spent one week in a winter survival course, practicing survival skills with only the tools and equipment that they would have with them while patrolling power lines or otherwise working in the field.



Participants practice setting up a makeshift shelter as part of their winter survival training.

“COVID-19 had put a hold on many things over the past two years, but the need for essential training, like winter survival and a few others, was paramount,” said Operations and Maintenance Specialist **Daren Boyd**, who organized the sessions. “We accomplished this training as soon as we were authorized to do so, and even then we had to cancel the original dates due to a positive test by one of the trainers the weekend before the training was scheduled to happen.”

He went on to explain that rescheduling was not as simple as it may seem; it required participants to cancel and remake hotel reservations, adjust their work schedules and rearrange their own plans to facilitate the later date. Fortunately, they were able to do so, and they regrouped two weeks later to participate in the training.

“Planning around COVID-19 is something we are going to have to overcome with perseverance and determination while respecting the significance that it has on each one of us, likely for years to come,” Boyd continued.

The attendees participated in several class-oriented instructional overviews before heading out to the

snowy terrain. The course is critical for Rocky Mountain linemen and communication technicians who are required to respond to onsite or on-line emergencies and will potentially face inclement winter weather conditions while doing so.

“Going into this survival course, I already had respect for the wilderness and conditions that may exist,” said Foreman II **Jonathan Pearce**, “but this course took it to a higher level of understanding of what could happen when performing winter operations. Being isolated on a remote 11,000-foot mountaintop and in extreme wet and cold temperatures, anxiety can quickly set in.”

He emphasized that learning new skills and applying them in training can end up making a big difference in practice.

“It allows one to quickly assess what to do to maximize survivability,” he explained.

Participants learned about cold-weather survival, avalanche awareness, maneuvering outdoor winter vehicles and navigation with a map and compass or GPS. These lessons were designed to help them understand how to survive winter condi-

tions, as encouraged by WAPA’s *Power System Maintenance Manual* and *Power System Safety Manual*.

“With different scenarios that winter conditions can present, it’s important to learn to properly plan, have survival gear and equipment on hand and keep up on essential training,” said Pearce. “Those practices are a foundation for safety and they help us to carry out all tasks that may arise during winter conditions.”

Participants also practiced the safe operation and emergency repairs of snowcats and either snowmobiles or utility vehicles, depending on what type of equipment they generally use.

“Learning proper driving skills for snowcat and snowmobile operations, emergency maintenance techniques such as drive-belt replacement on older machines and snow-cave building for potential overnight stays in winter environments are invaluable skills to help us meet mission objectives,” Pearce added.

In total, RM hosted three sessions of the winter survival course, two in Montrose, Colorado, and one in Evanston, Wyoming. □

Note: The author is a management analyst.



Employee feedback shapes strategic plan

Chief Strategy Officer **Kerry Whitford** is working with senior leaders to develop WAPA's 2030 strategic plan, the successor to *Strategic Roadmap 2024*. The Roadmap was originally developed in 2014 and outlined four Critical Pathways that WAPA would focus on over a 10-year period.

“Much has been accomplished under the Roadmap and many of the tactical action plan initiatives have either been completed or operationalized,” Whitford said. “The Strategy Office plans to summarize and celebrate key accomplishments as we transition to a new strategic plan.”

She explained that good strategic planning calls for senior leaders to revisit, assess and adjust the organization’s priorities, goals and actions. WAPA is ensuring that the organization remains focused on meeting its customers’ needs, aligned with Department of Energy goals and responsive to industry change through the 2030 strategic planning effort.

Whitford and the Senior Leadership Team are hard at work on the new strategic plan, and she has found feedback – from employees in particular – to be especially helpful during this process.

“You spoke and we listened,” Whitford said. “I could not be more grateful to the employees who provided us with their feedback. All of it was heard, all of it was discussed and it is helping us to shape the organization’s new strategic plan. I hope to continue hearing from employees, because their feedback is valued greatly.”

Earlier this year, Whitford surveyed WAPA employees, customers and other stakeholders to better understand their perspectives on WAPA, its culture and the direction it should take in the future to address internal and external threats and opportunities. More than 250 employees responded, and Whitford hopes that she will hear from many more very soon.

“Employee feedback has been so helpful to senior leaders in identifying strategic priorities that we are going to actively solicit more of it,” she said. “We want to hear from everybody, and it’s important to us that anyone who has feedback on WAPA’s strategic direction also has an opportunity to share their thoughts.”

In addition to soliciting feedback directly from employees, the SLT vetted the initial strategic priorities with a group of council chairs and functional area representatives. All of the input received is being used to develop a “top-tier” strategy and shape specific

strategic objectives that will drive the next phase of development.

Her team is planning to hold a series of Let’s Talk Strategy sessions in the near future, and she encouraged employees to keep an eye on their email for specific dates and instructions for participating. These will be opportunities for employees to hear about the strategic plan, discuss the proposed strategic themes, results and objectives and learn how to provide formal comments.

“The SLT is working hard with council representatives, taking all of the comments we received on board and developing strategic priorities, goals and objectives,” Whitford said. “Everyone at WAPA is going to get another chance to participate, and I want to hear from you.”

The team has used all feedback received about WAPA’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to create a final analysis, better known as a SWOT analysis. This will help identify the strategic direction and set specific objectives for the organization.

“The final SWOT incorporates employee feedback and the SLT is using it to identify our strategic direction and goals,” she said. “Our proposed strategies so far are aligning nicely,

and our representatives from councils and functional areas are creating and proposing strategic objectives to address these.”

Whitford credited her colleagues on the SLT for the leadership that they are demonstrating throughout this process. Being still relatively new to WAPA, she is impressed with the level of engagement and the seriousness with which members of the SLT take their strategic planning responsibilities.

“The SLT is leading WAPA by determining the overarching strategy for the organization,” she said. “By collecting input, they are better able to help develop the strategic plan, as well as understand and respond to the concerns of employees at all levels. This entire process allows WAPA’s leaders to lead, while still allowing others to be involved in the strategy.”

Whitford said that employees will be hearing more about the 2030 strategic plan in the coming months, and she encourages everyone to get involved and share their thoughts.

“We need your continued involvement,” she concluded. “Sign up for the Let’s Talk Strategy sessions. Be prepared to participate and let us hear your thoughts. Please continue to share your feedback.” □

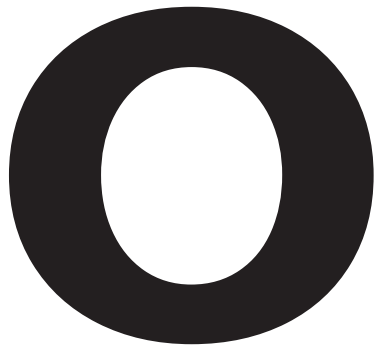
Senior Leadership Team prioritized SWOT analysis

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer focus/engagement Core mission Institutional knowledge Strong culture Capital planning | Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate stability/affordability Strategic prioritization WAPA’s aging infrastructure Drought/adverse impact response Institutional knowledge/expertise |
| Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markets Emerging technologies Hydropower advocacy Transmission infrastructure Stakeholder partnerships/relationships | Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drought/adverse conditions Aging infrastructure of hydropower facilities Impacts to rate stability/affordability Sustainable funding Cybersecurity and physical security Rapidly changing industry |

The SWOT matrix is an example of the data gathered from employees, customers, councils, functional areas and stakeholders that is being used by the Senior Leadership Team in strategy formulation.



Panel discussion spotlights Women of WAPA



n March 17, the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity and the Leadership Development Program partnered to host a “Women of WAPA” virtual panel discussion. This event was part of the Leadership Essentials series of webinars and was intended to mark Women’s History Month.

“ Every employee, regardless of their identity, is valued at WAPA, but we can only compete for top talent if we continue to attract, hire and welcome qualified people, regardless of their identity. ”

“The Women of WAPA panel discussion started as a simple idea and just organically came together,” said Equal Employment Manager **Charles Montañez**. “The OIED team has been collaborating and working with the LDP and we were looking for our first project together. As it turned out, the timing of this project was perfect.”

Narrowing down the panelists was not easy.

“It didn’t take long for us to realize how important this discussion was going to be and how inspired we were,” he continued. “WAPA has many women as strong role models not only in leadership roles, but throughout the organization. Based on this, we also felt that it was extremely important that we had an all-woman moderation team interviewing our all-woman panel, highlighting this point.”

The event was hosted by Equal Employment Specialist **Peggy Wooten** and moderated by Leadership Development Specialist **Sarah P.**

“Over the years, the federal government has designated seven special emphasis programs that are intended to assure full participation of under-represented groups in the federal workforce,” Wooten explained during

the event. “We work toward this goal through workforce analysis, advice, education and outreach. Programs like this one are intended to help the audience by giving them some insight into the experience of the recognized group.”

She then pointed out both that WAPA is fortunate to have women in key leadership roles and that they are still not equally represented.

“Women only represent 25% of the workforce at WAPA,” she said. “Every employee, regardless of their identity, is valued at WAPA, but we can only compete for top talent if we continue to attract, hire and welcome qualified people, regardless of their identity. This is just one way we hope to engage WAPA’s workforce in creating a diverse and inclusive organization.”

The panelists were Engineering and Construction Manager **Teresita Amaro**, Administrative Officer **Kayti Bashore** and Public Utilities Specialist **Padmini Palwe**. Opening remarks were provided by Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer **Jennifer Rodgers**.

“Women’s History Month gives us an opportunity to reflect on the strength and resilience women have

demonstrated since the start of time, and their amazing achievements in all areas contributing to making the world, our country and the workplace better,” said Rodgers at the start of the event. “We have a tendency to focus on outstanding women in history who introduced historic change, the exceptional women who served as inspirations for current and future generations, like Marie Curie, Hedy Lamarr, Katherine Johnson and Serena Williams. Today I ask each of you instead to reflect on the women who have had a positive impact on your life. Relatives, coworkers, healthcare workers, friends and many others.”

“Programs like panel discussions allow the participants to hear the experiences of their colleagues firsthand instead of listening or reading about the perspectives of consultants and trainers,” said Montañez. “Storytelling is one of the most impactful ways to get a point across and gain the support of the audience.”

For one hour, the panelists covered many topics, including their personal role models, what they’d tell themselves at age 25, advice for other women in the workplace, how to be

more inclusive and supportive and even their own legacies.

According to Montañez, the event was a success, with much positive feedback from the attendees. He was impressed by the end result.

"I feel that these moderators and the panelists represented the strength and breadth of the women of WAPA so well," he said. "It is an important perspective and discussion for people to hear. I hope those who attended can

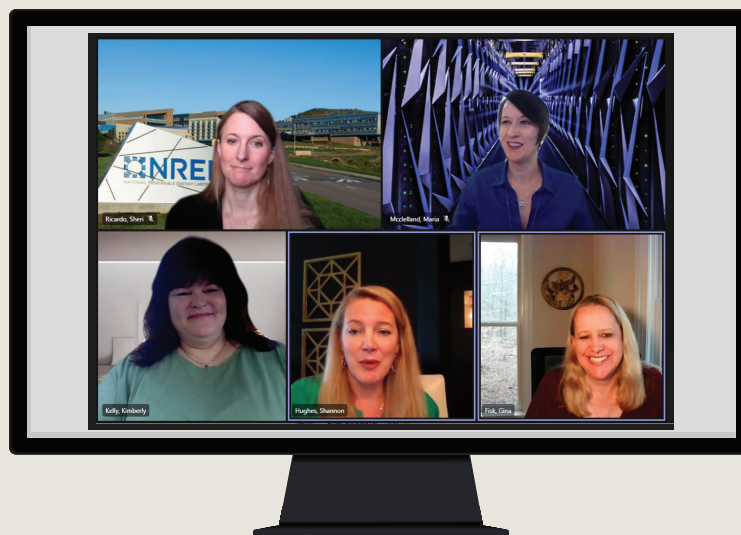
appreciate that we all need to appreciate each other and our contributions."

He looks forward to supporting similar events in the future and hopes that WAPA employees will make time to tune in or watch the recordings later.

"These programs help ensure that WAPA takes affirmative steps to improve the employment and advancement opportunities of traditionally underrepresented minority groups and protects equal opportunity

for minorities, women and people with disabilities in all areas of employment," he said. "These are designed to be educational and employment-related and serve as a way to provide cultural awareness to everyone." □

View the entire hourlong panel discussion at my.wapa.int/departments/EID/Pages/Women's-History-Month.aspx



WAPA employee participates in DOE lunch-and-learn panels

By Leah Shapiro

In honor of Women's History Month, the Department of Energy Office of the Chief Information Officer offered a series of lunch-and-learn panel discussions to celebrate women in cybersecurity. Topics included embracing diversity and highlighting the accomplishments of women in cybersecurity. According to a 2020 Cybersecurity Workforce Report, women working in cybersecurity account for 24% of the overall workforce.

Supervisory Information Technology Cybersecurity Specialist **Kim Kelly** served as a panelist during the Week 2 "Showcase of women-led cyber efforts across the DOE" event. In addition to leading cybersecurity operations at WAPA, Kelly is on detail to the Department of Energy. In that capacity, she

serves as a program manager assessing the Power Marketing Administrations' maturity related to requirements of Executive Order 14028, which focuses on improving the nation's cybersecurity, and assisting in writing PMA Zero Trust architecture plans.

Kelly was joined by three additional panelists from other DOE sites. They answered questions about their most challenging projects, their priorities and what they would want women to know about pursuing a career in cybersecurity. They also had opportunities to showcase how their efforts add to the overall DOE cybersecurity mission. Kelly highlighted her team's focus on installing sensors across the enterprise to gather data on operational technology components, the importance of

relationships and the value of information sharing.

Her advice to women looking to enter the field is, "Don't disqualify yourself when reading a job posting just because you may not check every single box. Apply, apply, apply. You never know what hiring managers might be looking for and what skills or experience they might be prioritizing. Volunteer for opportunities. Take the classes that are available to you. Network and cultivate relationships. Explore as much as you can. That's how you learn what part of cyber might best suit your skills and interests." □

Note: The author is a management and program analyst.

OEID: under construction!

By Peggy Wooten

The Office of Economic Impact and Diversity is currently under construction, making this a good time to discuss the department and what to expect.



In addition to the Diversity & Inclusion Program featured last month, one of OEID's roles is managing discrimination complaints. However, the Department of Energy is realigning complaints management to the agency level. Employees will receive detailed information on this transition to ensure transparency.

The Equal Employment Opportunity process will remain the same. The DOE will have EEO staff located at WAPA Headquarters, who employees may still contact. The DOE Office of Civil Rights and Diversity will be responsible for providing EEO services such as counseling and complaint filing.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission provides organizations with a checklist of best practices, and

the OEID follows them to ensure that WAPA provides fair and equitable opportunities for each employee to succeed from recruitment to retirement.

OEID will continue to complete the annual "MD-715, A Model Equal Employment Opportunity Program" report in order to create an Affirmative Employment Plan to help WAPA understand challenges and growth opportunities, such as a need to change practices or focus on expanding an applicant pool for positions.

Much data mining and analysis goes into this effort, along with in-depth discussions with our business partners and stakeholders in the field regarding their experiences, concerns and overall culture.

Finally, OEID continues to build great partnerships and working relationships throughout the organization, such as with the Power Marketing Administrations Human Resources Shared Service Center, the Leadership Development Program and the Inclusion and Diversity Committees.

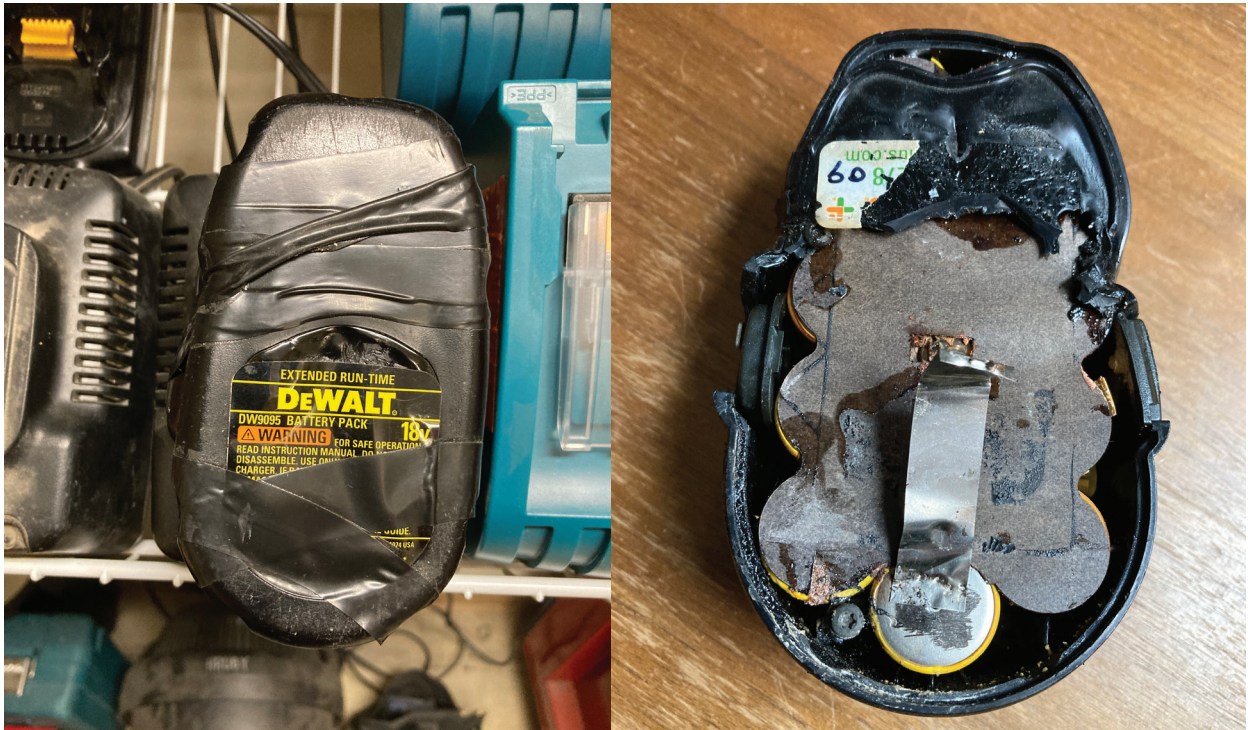
OEID looks forward to continuing to share information about providing quality services to WAPA employees.

□

Note: The author is an equal employment specialist.

For more information, visit
**myWAPA, Departments,
Economic Impact and Diversity**





An obscured warning label was just one element that led to a recent near-miss event at a WAPA facility.

Make every month Electrical Safety Month

By Paul Robbins

May is Electrical Safety Month, a fitting time to remind us of the importance of warning labels and other related electrical safety issues.

How often do you read the warning labels on electrical products? A recent near-miss event illustrates why labels are important. While working in a WAPA facility, an employee heard a hissing noise and soon smelled a pungent burnt-chemical odor. After investigating and discovering a smoky tool storage room, the employee alerted facilities personnel.

After further inspection of the area, employees found the melted casing of an 18-volt battery pack fused to a battery charger in the tool room. The pack had electrical tape wrapped around it that partially covered its warning label. The incident was reported to the onsite safety office and a Near-Miss Report was processed.

It was found that, in 2000, there was a safety product recall released by the manufacturer of the battery charger and packs, addressing battery pack clips coming loose and causing the packs to fall from their chargers. In this case, the product involved was not returned to the manufacturer under the recall, which led to a series of events that caused the near miss.

A label on the battery charger stated, "Danger: Do not charge damaged battery packs, replace immediately." Electrical tape was wrapped around the battery pack, covering a part of a warning message that read, "If battery pack is cracked or damaged, do not insert in charger." In addition to covering this part of the label, the electrical tape may have also covered cracks or damage to the product.

Recalls identify defective products and safety hazards. The manufacturer of this product said on their 2000 product recall site, "Consumers should immediately stop using the battery packs." Failure to follow a safety recall can void the manufacturer's responsibility for a product.

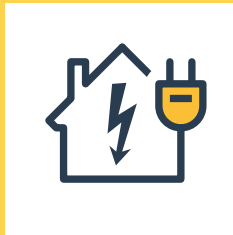
Manufacturers should notify customers of active product recalls. To check a product's recall status or get information on a specific recall, visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission website at cpsc.gov/recalls



It should also be noted that modifications of any kind to an electrical product can void a warranty or manufacturer responsibility. In this instance, wrapping electrical tape around the battery pack could be viewed as a modification.

If you have a question about a product's authorized use or safety precautions, consult the user's guide or owner's manual. These are helpful in keeping people informed and safe. They also provide contact information for the manufacturer if you have further questions.

Practice electrical safety by reading warning labels, paying attention to recalls and protecting yourself and others from electrical hazards at work and at home.



Home protections from electrical hazards

Did you know that an average of 51,000 electrical-related home structure fires occur every year in the U.S.? They cause more than \$1.3 billion in damage, claim hundreds of lives and injure thousands more. Electrical Safety Foundation International also reports that hundreds of people suffer electrocution annually.

ESFI suggests a few things that can help make your home safer.

Thousands of children are shocked or burned annually while sticking objects into electrical outlets. This can be prevented with tamper-resistant receptacles. The receptacle looks like a regular outlet, only it has a spring-loaded shutter system inside that prevents insertion of objects other than those that are intended. The simultaneous pressure of a standard

plug pushing into the receptacle opens the shutter for normal use.

Home wiring can become damaged in many ways. Nails and screws punched through walls can damage wiring and it may crack from old age. Extension cords can become pinched under furniture or crimped in corners. Whatever the reason, damaged, stressed and overheated wiring can cause arc faults that start fires. Arc-fault circuit interrupters, or AFCIs, replace standard circuit breakers that do not recognize arc faults. Combination AFCI breakers have specialized electronic components that identify arc faults in a home's electrical system and then cut power before a fire starts.

Water and electricity are dangerous in combination. A ground-fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, is a specialized outlet designed to cut power and prevent shock or electrocution when a ground fault or leaking current is detected. They are used primarily in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and outdoor areas where electrical products may contact water.

GFCIs monitor electricity from an outlet that powers an appliance, such as a hairdryer in the bathroom. If the hairdryer were dropped into a sink full of water during use, the GFCI would detect the interruption and cut electrical power to the device in around one-thirtieth of a second. A GFCI can either be built into an outlet to protect several outlets in series, or it can be incorporated as a GFCI circuit breaker. In addition, there are dual-function AFCI and GFCI circuit breakers.

Remember, only licensed and qualified electricians should install tamper-resistant receptacles, arc-fault circuit interrupters and ground-fault circuit interrupters. They can also perform an evaluation of your home system.

Protect your home from electrical hazards and make every month Electrical Safety Month. □

Note: The author is a technical writer who works under the Cherokee Nation Strategic Programs contract.

Learn more at esfi.org



CIO participates in AI leadership program

Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer **Mike Montoya** was selected to participate in the Artificial Intelligence Federal Leadership Program, which kicked off in February and is organized by the Partnership for Public Service. Montoya joins around 20 other Senior Executive Service professionals across various federal agencies.

The seven-month program covers such topics as designing an AI strategy, fostering an AI-ready culture, the future of AI in government and more.

In addition to the educational sessions, participants work in small groups to tackle scenario-based challenges, discuss real-work issues and complete an applied use case project capable of being implemented at their respective agencies.

"I am excited to be part of the program because it will help me increase my knowledge of AI technology itself," said Montoya. "I look forward to meeting other executives in federal government who are interested in further exploring this technology and learning about how other agencies are looking to apply AI."



WAPA hosts Returning to the Workplace Town Hall

On March 31, WAPA hosted a Returning to the Workplace Town Hall for employees, offering an extended discussion about the organization's return to the workplace.

During this event, management and the Re-Entry and Future of Work teams explored what returning to the workplace will mean for all employees at WAPA and what the new Future of Work pilot will entail.

Attendees first heard from Administrator and CEO **Tracey LeBeau**. Transmission Asset Planning Program Manager **Chris Lyles** spoke about re-entry, Management and Program Analyst **Stacey Decker** led the Future of Work discussion with her team and Chief of Staff **Melissa Ardis** facilitated the employee Q&A session.

View the full
recording and
presentation
materials at



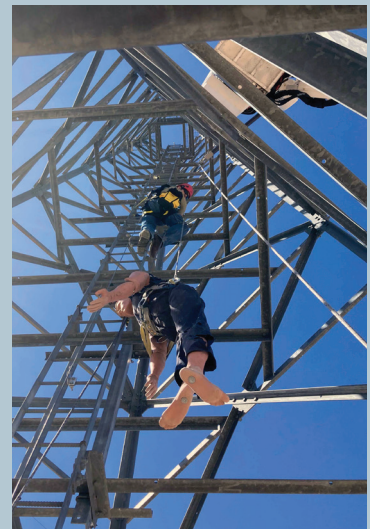
**myWAPA, More News, Returning
to the Workplace Town Hall
recording available**

In-person Fall Protection training resumes

In March, WAPA's annual Fall Protection Train-the-Trainer meeting was held in person for the first time since 2020. It consisted of an in-person meeting in Henderson, Nevada, and a hands-on Fall Protection Training at the Mead Substation.

Attendees first met and discussed changes to equipment and safety standards published by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the American National Standards Institute. Most of this meeting addressed 169 revisions to the ANSI Z359 Fall Protection Code and Standards and how the changes would affect all craft employees who are qualified climbers.

Fall protection trainers and specialists then participated in the hands-on climbing and rescue portions of the event held at the Mead Substation Training Yard. All attendees completed the climbing requirement, which included activities such as conducting on-site equipment inspections, developing Job Hazard Analyses and climbing structures typical of each craft. Attendees also performed self-rescue exercises and rescues of a weighted mannequin for various climbing and craft scenarios.



Rapid Recaps

DOE CIO tours WAPA

On April 12-13, three visitors from the Department of Energy's Office of the Chief Information Officer visited WAPA Headquarters in Lakewood, Colorado. The guests were Deputy Chief Information Officer for Cybersecurity and Chief Information Security Officer Greg Sisson, Geospatial Officer Joshua Linard and Information Technology Specialist Jared Bellman.

They discussed technology needs, opportunities for more partnership and other topics with WAPA's IT leaders. Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer **Mike Montoya** delivered an abbreviated WAPA 101 presentation followed by an overview of WAPA's IT program priorities and accomplishments. Chief Information Security Officer **Kevin Schulz** discussed incident reporting, executive orders and the Federal Information Security Modernization Act.

The visitors also toured the Rocky Mountain regional office and the Loveland Operations Center in Loveland, Ault Substation in Weld County and the Electric Power Training Center in Golden.



508 Corner

By Nathan Alarid

Every month, WAPA's Section 508 team will provide tips and tricks to help employees ensure that their documents and web content are successfully compliant and accessible for those with disabilities. Remember: Before any content can be made public, it must be Section 508 compliant.

May's tips

The Accessibility Checker in Adobe Acrobat Pro 2017 reviews PDF content for accessibility issues. It also provides suggestions on how to resolve them. Its Autotag Document function can tag PDFs to provide a hidden structured, textual representation of the content that is presented to screen readers. For example, documents with visual lists can be tagged with list tags, documents that have visual data tables can be tagged with table tags and so on.

Using the Autotag Document function can greatly reduce the headache of having to locate and correct accessibility issues within your documents.

1. If Accessibility is listed in your tools pane, click that and go to Step 4. If Accessibility is not listed in your tools pane, click More Tools.

2. Scroll down to Accessibility. Beneath it, click the arrow pointing down and choose Add Shortcut.
3. Confirm that Accessibility is now listed in your tools pane. Click it.
4. Click Autotag Document. Wait for the autotagging to finish.
5. Save the document.

WAPA's Section 508 Team

Launched by the Department of Energy, Public Affairs created a Section 508 team. This team identifies, establishes and provides guidance in Section 508 program management. The mandate under Section 508 enables the team to guide employees to conform electronic content to current Section 508 standards. □

Note: The author is a webmaster who works under the Wyandotte Services contract.

Visit **myWAPA, Departments, Public Affairs, Section 508** for resources to help you create, test and remedy the content you share online in compliance with Section 508 requirements. If you still have questions, contact **section508@wapa.gov**





Reminder: Complete mandatory trainings

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation Critical Infrastructure Protection Security Awareness Training must be completed by all WAPA federal and contract employees by May 20. Additionally, federal employees are required to complete Administrative Control of Funds training by June 1.

The trainings are available in Learning Nucleus, which you can access directly at learningnucleus.energy.gov or via the Employee Self-Service portal, accessible from the myWAPA homepage.

If you need assistance accessing the training, contact the Learning Nucleus Help Desk at 505.845.4767 or sos@ntc.doe.gov. If you need additional help, contact the WAPA IT Call Center via WITCC Chat.



Report harassing conduct

Per the Department of Energy's March 3 Policy Memorandum #102, Prevention and Elimination of Prohibited Harassing Conduct, any employees who believe that they have been subjected to prohibited harassing conduct or prohibited retaliatory conduct, or who witness what they believe to be prohibited harassing conduct, are encouraged to inform the person or persons responsible and request that the conduct stop.

If the prohibited harassing conduct continues or is severe, or if the employee is uncomfortable addressing those responsible, they are encouraged to report the matter to their supervisor, the supervisor of the alleged harasser, another supervisor or reportharassment@wapa.gov.

Management officials who observe or who receive complaints of prohibited harassing conduct are required to report the matter within three business days and immediately notify the victim and reporting employee of the submission.



Federal Substance Abuse Testing Program reinstated

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic declared March 13, 2020, the Secretary of Energy issued a Secretarial Memorandum suspending specific safety requirements set in Department of Energy Order 343.1, Federal Substance Abuse Testing Program. As the DOE transitioned out of its maximum telework status March 14, the Federal Substance Abuse Testing Program for federal employees in testing designated positions, or TDPs, is being reinstated.

The program includes randomly testing federal employees assigned to a TDP, conducting pre-employment testing for potential new federal employees in a TDP and completing the suspended pre-employment testing for federal employees who started in a TDP while the program was suspended. All DOE federal employees are subject to reasonable suspicion and post-accident substance abuse testing.

Effective the pay period beginning May 8, pre-employment testing will begin for applicants selected for a TDP.

Effective the pay period beginning June 5, testing will begin for current DOE employees who started during the Federal Drug Testing Program suspension period and are assigned to a TDP.

Effective the pay period beginning July 3, the DOE will return to monthly random drug testing for federal employees assigned to TDPs.

Contact doedrugtestingprogram@hq.doe.gov or 202.586.9844 with questions regarding this program.

